



NEWS

**For Immediate Release
April 23, 2003**

**Final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact Documents
Available for UMTRA Ground Water Project Site at Naturita, Colorado**

(Grand Junction, CO)—The U.S. Department of Energy Grand Junction Office (DOE–GJO) announces the availability of the final *Environmental Assessment of Ground Water Compliance at the Naturita, Colorado, UMTRA Project Site* and the *Finding of No Significant Impact* document for the site. The *Environmental Assessment* provides information concerning the potential effects of the selected ground-water compliance strategy for the Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action (UMTRA) Ground Water Project site at Naturita. The *Finding of No Significant Impact* states that no significant adverse environmental effects will result from the planned strategy and that an *Environmental Impact Statement* document is not needed.

The Naturita UMTRA Ground Water Project site is a former uranium and vanadium ore-processing facility located in western Colorado about 2 miles northwest of the city of Naturita in Montrose County. The site is situated on an elongated north-south section of floodplain bounded by the San Miguel River on the east and State Highway 141 on the west.

Uranium and vanadium are the only contaminants remaining in the ground water that will require more than 100 years of natural flushing before concentrations will decrease to acceptable levels. However, neither humans nor the environment are currently being harmed or are anticipated to be harmed by the uranium and vanadium concentrations remaining in the ground water.

The *Environmental Assessment* states that DOE's compliance strategy for the Naturita site is no further remediation with the application of alternate concentration limits for uranium and vanadium. Alternate concentration limits allow DOE to set contaminant levels to values that will be protective of humans and animals in locations where the ground water might surface. In

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conjunction with the compliance strategy, DOE will ensure that institutional controls are maintained to restrict ground water use. Institutional controls protect public health and the environment by limiting access to a contaminated medium. DOE will also continue to collect and analyze ground water and surface water samples from the site.

Reference copies of the *Environmental Assessment* and the *Finding of No Significant Impact* will be placed in the Naturita Public Library in Naturita, the Montrose Public Library in Montrose, the Nucla Public Library in Nucla, the Mesa County Public Library in Grand Junction, and the DOE–GJO Public Reading Room in Grand Junction by May 2, 2003. The documents will also be available on the DOE–GJO website at

<http://www.gjo.doe.gov/ugw/sites/co/naturita/naturita.htm>. Copies of the documents can be requested by contacting DOE–GJO toll-free at 1–800–399–5618.

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